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SECURITY INFORMATION

50X1-HUM

REPORT

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SUBJECT 1.Port of Kherson
2.Air and Sea Exercises near Odessa

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1. [redacted] ship was approaching Odessa, [redacted] observed a large warship of the Trento type near the mouth of the Dnepr River. The warship was heading towards the mouth of the river, but then it turned and headed south, possibly towards Sevastopol. [redacted]
[redacted] 50X1-HUM
2. At the same time, about ten landing craft, armed with guns and carrying tanks, came out of Odessa. These were followed by several tugs and three submarines in line astern formation. The group headed south, keeping three or four miles from the coast.
3. [redacted] there was fire action in the area between Odessa and five miles south of Cape Fontana, indicating that maneuvers were being conducted there. The fire action came from the landing craft and some batteries that were emplaced in that vicinity. From the noise of the latter, they must have been guns of heavy caliber. 50X1-HUM
4. Three or four aircraft also participated in the exercises. They were very fast but of an unidentified type. They had come from Odessa and were maneuvering over the naval formation.
5. Ships bound for Nikolayev or Kherson must radio Inflat at Odessa the expected time of arrival. At Odessa they anchor in the roads to await the boarding of the pilot. This pilot takes the ship from the Odessa roadstead to within one mile of Kherson, where the harbor pilot boards and takes the ship to its berth. The pilots are in naval uniform and know only an indispensable minimum of English.
6. At Odessa the shipboard inspection is conducted very carefully by the Customs and Police personnel. Each ship is boarded by about ten persons

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(women included) from the Customs, Police, and Sanitation Department. During the inspection, one has the impression that the members of the boarding party are already familiar with the ship, so sure and decisive are they in finding their way about.

7. [] dredging was in progress at the mouth of the Dnepr. Two dredges were at work, so that ships with a deeper draft might sail the river. The Dnepr is usually frozen in the winter and shipping moves with the help of icebreakers from Odessa. In the summer the downstream current had a speed of 1.5 knots. 50X1-HUM
8. For ships bound for Kherson, the entrance to the navigable canal is about 55 miles from Kherson. On the right there is a flashing beacon [] On the left there are numerous shoals. The entire navigable canal is marked with lighted buoys, placed approximately one-half mile apart. Moreover, there are markers on land. 50X1-HUM
9. The fuel storage depot is situated three miles downstream from Kherson. The depot has wooden piers which have been extended by posts driven into the bottom, to permit ships of a certain length to berth alongside.
10. Near the grain elevator, there are heaps of coal stored in the open air. The coal is loaded by automatic electric cranes.
11. In Kherson, as in all Soviet ports, the only agency is the State agency, Inflat, which also employs women. The salary is reputed to be 1,000 rubles a month. Service is punctual and efficient. The formalities of pratique are usually handled quickly and accurately but the health inspection on this trip was rather superficial. The administrative paper work is also done efficiently. However, it is useless to argue with the local officials if an error in calculation is made. Furthermore, one runs the risk of not being able to leave. It is better to pay and then protest by telegram. Errors are then checked and reimbursement is made. The cost of one day's call for loading was 1,420 dollars, and this included the 500 rubles for Inflat.
12. There are no powerful tugs at Kherson. [] a damaged rudder caused the ship to go aground just south of the harbor. A tug had to be called from Odessa and finally arrived two days later. 50X1-HUM
13. [] ship drew alongside the only pier that serves the grain elevator. The pier was about 150 meters long and two to three meters high. Constructed of masonry, it was somewhat in disrepair and it was protected by wooden fenders which permitted ships to draw alongside. This pier can accommodate ships with a summer draft of 20.5 feet and a winter draft of 18 feet. 50X1-HUM
14. [] a few railroad sidings near the grain elevator but no sheds or warehouses were visible. The installations comprising the grain elevator extend about 150 meters in length and are composed of vertical silos, 30 meters tall and 15 to 20 feet in diameter. These silos are used for grain only and are filled by conveyor belts which carry the grain to them. 50X1-HUM
15. The ship was loaded by four spouts which transferred 4,000 tons of grain in six hours.
16. About one and one-half miles downstream from the grain pier, there is a shipyard. [] it was rather small and guarded by sentries. There probably are marine repair shops in the vicinity because work is done on the slip and on the quays. However, prices are so high that foreign ships are seldom tended there. No dry docks were observed, either floating or on land. 50X1-HUM
17. The piers and wharves on the left bank of the river are almost all destroyed but they are being reconstructed. [] 50X1-HUM

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18. [redacted] Patrolling of the port is done by picket-boats manned by civilian and military personnel. These boats are not equipped with either armament or radar but they do have searchlights. 50X1-HUM
19. Every ship, including Soviet ships, is guarded by two sentries, one at the gangplank and one who paces the length of the ship. Both are armed with a pistol only. Patrols of two or three policemen make rounds in the port area during the night, and all persons coming in or out of the port area are carefully checked.
20. There are other military reservations [redacted] 50X1-HUM
21. The roads in the port area and the city are in very poor condition, although they are wide and numerous. In the port area, except for short sections, they are usually dirt-covered, while in the city they are paved with loose stone.
22. In the city, food is rationed and the port employees eat at the community canteens, where the bread is black. They can purchase additional food with a card. Clothing of all types is high-priced; for example, a man's hat is 150 rubles. There are government shops, however, where workers with ration tickets can purchase food, clothing, etc. Medicines, apparently, are at a premium. The local inhabitants often ask foreign ship captains for them and, should a foreign ship need medicine, the request can not always be filled by the Soviets. The newest medicines are usually not available. The city has an automatic telephone system but telegrams filed in the city are accepted only in Russian or English.
23. [redacted] local traffic is carried by river craft sailing the Koshevaya River. The whole port area is well illuminated by lights set about ten meters apart on the streets and on the quays. 50X1-HUM
24. In regard to the morale of the civilian population, no positive information could be gleaned. The government employees had only praise for the regime but among the dock workers some discontent was evidenced from their remarks. Some of these dock workers knew a few words of German.

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